

Additionally, Dr. Edwin Gullekson will be honored as the CAC 2005 Physician of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud these wonderful men and women for all they have done for others. Through their actions, they ensure that our children are able to enjoy healthy, productive, and safe lives, and I ask my colleagues in the 109th Congress to please join me in recognizing their heroic efforts.

HONORING CUB SCOUT PACK 88 OF
THE BSA'S DES PLAINES VALLEY
COUNCIL AND THEIR 60
YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 18, 2005

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Cub Scout Pack 88 of the Boy Scouts of America's Des Plaines Valley Council on their 60th anniversary.

In 1930, the Boy Scouts of America created a new opportunity called Cub Scouting for boys younger than Boy Scout age. A year-round, home-centered program used by chartered organizations, Cub Scouting emphasizes involvement between boys and their parents, adult leaders, and friends. In the multidimensional plan of the Boy Scouts of America, Cub Scouting is where it all begins.

For the past 60 years, Cub Scout Pack 88 has been a cornerstone of service in the Des Plaines Valley communities. They have combined fun with educational activities and life-long values. Parents and sons of Pack 88 spend quality time together going places, doing projects, talking, and reading. Pack 88 also provides a healthy, safe environment in which boys learn important values and develop self-confidence.

For these reasons, it is my honor to recognize Cub Scout Pack 88 on their 60th anniversary. I look forward to many more years of their continued service to our community and our youth.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the majority should be absolutely ashamed of the bill before us today. It is simply unconscionable that the majority is not only moving forward with reconciliation but that they are increasing cuts all under the guise of paying for Hurricane Katrina relief. Under their rules, they won't even allow amendments to this monstrosity—shutting down any meaningful opportunity of offering even slight improvements to this bill. The fact of the matter is that the irresponsible tax cuts for the wealthy have run our country's fiscal order into the red with over \$8 trillion in debt. Even before Hurricane Katrina, the budget resolution called for \$35 billion in cuts to programs for the poor to partially offset the \$106 billion in tax cuts in the same budget resolution. The math simply doesn't add up.

It is interesting that the majority continues to use terms like personal responsibility when justifying the draconian cuts to services, cruel penalties and cost sharing for the poor that will essentially block access to care while failing to exercise the same responsibility in their own fiscal disorder. The general fund of the Government of the United States is paid for with borrowed money, over \$1 billion a day. To make ends meet while continuing to pass tax cuts, we borrow heavily from China, Japan and other foreign nations, knowing full well our children and grandchildren will one day be saddled with our debt. In the meantime, they pretend we can shore up our economy with a few simple reforms that will have devastating consequences for the most vulnerable children, seniors and other impoverished people, which won't really affect the trillions of dollars of debt created by the majority's fiscal irresponsibility.

What is irresponsible are the billions of dollars in cuts the majority is making to the Medicaid program. We already have 45 million uninsured Americans. Without Medicaid and SCHIP, the percentage of uninsured Americans, including children, would be a lot higher. As we all know, health care coverage isn't meaningful unless it is accessible and comprehensive. The proposals included in this bill will undoubtedly prove to be a barrier to care as it permits States to significantly increase the amounts Medicaid beneficiaries payout of pocket for premiums and copayments for healthcare services, again, all in the name of personal responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, but what about the low-income mother trying to care for her family by stretching her budget to cover housing, electricity, clothing and now increased cost-sharing and copayments for medical care? Why are we setting her up for failure when she has to make choices between her medical care and her children and her utility bills, all important to the wellbeing of her and her family? How have we fulfilled our professional responsibility if we put her in the position of making these impossible choices? I can assure you, these mothers are as familiar with personal responsibility and strapped budgets as any Member of Congress in this room.

Part of the problem that I have with these proposals are that the "reforms" are budget driven in that the solutions offered are far less important than the anticipated savings associated with them. I urge this committee to scrap these massive changes to Medicaid. While there are certainly ways to modernize, improve, and reform this program, it must be done with the compassion and thoughtful consideration it deserves.

A sensible improvement to this bill would be to permit early treatment under Medicaid to those with HIV. Under current Medicaid rules, most HIV positive people must meet both an income standard and be disabled—by AIDS—before they can receive access to Medicaid provided care and treatment that could have prevented them from becoming ill so quickly. This policy runs counter to current Federal HIV treatment guidelines which call for early access to medical care and treatment including the use of combination antiretroviral therapy. Medical costs for those with advanced AIDS are significantly higher than costs for caring for HIV positive people, and this is a burden on the States' Medicaid budgets.

I offered an amendment in the Energy and Commerce Committee markup for Medicaid

reform to give States the OPTION of amending their Medicaid eligibility requirements to include uninsured, pre-disabled low-income people living with HIV. ETHA, which has been introduced by Leader PELOSI in prior Congresses and Senator SMITH and Senator CLINTON in the Senate, is modeled after the successful Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act, BCCA, that allows States to provide early access to Medicaid to women with cancer. Forty nine States have implemented the BCCA, designed to preserve health and prevent unnecessary and high-cost medical interventions. As with the BCCA, ETHA includes an enhanced Federal match rate of 65 percent to 83 percent to encourage States to participate in offering the services.

Although my amendment failed in committee, Senators CLINTON and SMITH successfully offered a demonstration version of the Early Treatment for HIV Act on the Senate floor. I tried to offer that amendment on the House floor but the Republican leadership would not permit any amendments. It is my fervent hope that this provision survives conference.

Outside of the jurisdiction of the Energy and Commerce Committee, on which I serve, are even more cruel cuts to working families and vulnerable populations. Billions in cuts to student aid programs, child support enforcement, foster care and SSI disability payments. They cut food stamps, eliminated nutritional school lunch and breakfast programs for hundreds of thousands of families and children—the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, you should be ashamed to allow our Congress to even consider such proposals, let alone vote on them, while continuing to promote tax cuts for the wealthy. I vote "no" on this monstrosity and urge my colleagues to do the same.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 17, 2005

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Budget Reconciliation Bill, H.R. 4241, reported on a partisan basis by the House Committee on the Budget.

My colleagues have already highlighted many of the harsh cuts that would be made in this bill. These include, but are not limited to, cuts in Medicaid spending of nearly \$12 billion, cuts in the student loan program of more than \$14 billion, \$840 million in cuts in the food stamp programs, \$4.9 billion in cuts to the State child support enforcement programs, \$577 million in cuts to the foster care program and \$470 million in cuts to the Federal housing rehab program.

Let's be very clear on this point. These cuts will do nothing to reduce our growing deficit and, despite what many Republicans have tried to claim, they will not offset the costs we will rightly incur to recover from the catastrophic devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

In fact, while cutting almost \$50 billion in much needed social programs for the most needy, the bill "reconciles" another \$70 billion